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To a Cootie

*The greatest lessons oft are learned  
From lowly creatures we have spurned,  
And all great men will greater be  
If they have learned humility.*



# To a Cootie

## *The Least of His Creatures*

By

James H. Heron  
*Author-Humorist*



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## DEDICATION

This "wee bookie" is respectfully dedicated to the "Thirty Thousand Liars," all true Americans, many of them sons of Scotsmen, who answered the call of liberty in the early days of the Great War, crossed the border into Canada and swore they were citizens of Great Britain, that they might enlist and join the crusade against autocracy.

Many of them (too many) will not come back, but those who do, let us hope that their citizenship in the United States, whom they really went to serve, will immediately be fully restored to them.

*The Author*



# To a Cootie

From Inverness, a Scottish town,  
Came Angus Fraser of renown;  
The hero of this Cootie tale  
Was known far o'er hill and dale.

He stood six two, an athlete,  
At games of skill he'd oft compete;  
He loved fair play, an honest deal,  
A man of worth and true as steel.



The Greatest War had just begun,  
Great Britain called up every son  
And sent them hurriedly to France  
To stop the savage foe's advance.

Now, some men fight because they must,  
And some men fight for gain and lust;  
And some men feel they are above it,  
While others fight because they love it.



And Angus loved this fight because  
The German butcher broke the laws  
Of Nations, and with cursed pride  
The laws of God and man defied.

He loved to shoot and shoot to slay,  
Nor thought he had a perfect day  
Unless he clicked up half a score,  
And of'entimes he counted more.



His nerve was sure, his aim was straight,  
His eagle-eye could penetrate  
The battle-smoke-beclouded day  
And pink a Boche a mile away.

The Germans learned his aim to dread,  
A price was put upon his head,  
"An iron cross who fires the shot  
And kills this danger'us sniping Scot."





They tried their best to shoot him dead,  
But wary Angus pumped instead  
The bullets into Fritzie, prime,  
And took his toll most every time.

When fighting days are all the same  
The dreary grind grows very tame,  
But He who doeth all things well  
Sends Cooties to relieve the spell.



So when he wasn't killing Hun,  
Or polishing his trusty gun,  
He hunted Cooties in their lair  
And wished them all some other where.

He tried his best to shake 'em  
From his clothes, but couldn't make 'em  
Budge at all; no, they wouldn't go,  
Because they seemed to love him so.



While on a vigor'us hunt one day,  
A lone wee Cootie thought he'd stay  
And hide upon his hairy leg  
And take the Scottie down a peg.

Now, Coots are not supposed to bite  
When men are standing up to fight;  
But this wee Cootie didn't care,  
Bit Scottie's leg and made him swear.



It angered him, the Cootie's nip  
Annoyed him so he couldn't snip;  
He stooped to get the base marauder,  
When, crash! a noise that made him  
shudder.

A shot sped on its deadly way,  
Smashing a hole in the chalky clay,  
Right back of where his head had been—  
He'd ducked in time to save his skin.



He got the Cootie he was after,  
But didn't kill the little grafter;  
Holding it gently in his hand,  
Sat right down, too weak to stand.

That pellet of death had meant to slay,  
And but for the Cootie, he'd be on his way;  
Right now to the gate of St. Peter;  
Yes, on the way to meet his Creator.



Trembling so he could scarcely speak,  
Gently pressed the Coot to his cheek;  
Wild thoughts were buzzing in his head—  
“Thank God for you,” then Angus said.

“Ye’re a wee mite despised by man,  
But you are part of God’s great plan;  
So why do we think badly of yer breed,  
When a’ y’re after is yer feed?”



“Ye hunt yer feed in some queer places,  
An’ ye care not what the sex or race is;  
But, what’s on a lady’s bonnet?  
Surely there’s no feed upon it.

“ ‘Oh, wad some power the Giftie gie us  
To see oursel’s as others see us.’  
Do ye mind? Robbie Burns wrote that  
When he saw ye on the lassie’s hat.



“ ’Twas long ago afore ye changed yer name  
To Cootie, still yer bite’s the same;  
An’ still the folk will ca’ ye pest  
When at yer work and doin’ yer best.

“Weel I mind how ye did greet us,  
Ye came right to the boat to meet us,  
An’ weel I mind we tried to sleep  
On that first night we felt yer creep.





“We were well acquainted 'fore the dawn  
An' cursed ye well 'twixt yawn and yawn,  
An' tried to find ye, but ye had hid  
In a safe place, ye naughty kid.

“Hid where not a Scot could find ye,  
An' on the march we didn't mind ye;  
No, you were sleeping, snug and quiet,  
To rest yersel' for work that night.



“Ye stuck an’ knew ye were not wanted,  
An’ to the front ye came undaunted,  
An’ to roarin’ guns ye paid no heed,  
But settled down to get yer feed.

“An’ I didn’t like ye then at a’  
An’ to the ‘hot place’ condemned ye a’,  
But now I know through a’ this strife  
That you were sent to save my life.



“Aye, ye have saved my life the day,  
An’ I owe ye more than I can ever pay,  
An’ I owe my God wh’ rules above  
A closer fellowship and love.

“Cootie, I’ll not disturb ye more  
Whene’er yer wantin’ to explore  
My hairy shank, jist help yersel’  
An’ I’ll do not but wish ye well.



“An’ linger till a feast ye make,  
An’ if I grudge the bites ye take  
I’ll count mysel’ the bigger sinner,  
Now, I’ll put ye back to get yer dinner.”

*James H. Heron*



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# The Value of Humor

Now that the war is safely won,  
You've welcomed home your fighting son,  
You'll be ready for a little fun,

Humor or wit.

So laugh and sing, be always gay  
And strive to brighten every day;  
You'll find that humor has a way  
To benefit.

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JAMES H. HERON

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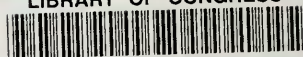






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